

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



**FISCAL NOTE**

**HB 831 - SB 1116**

March 15, 2015

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Requires the state election commission to provide an electronic registration application, for persons qualified to register to vote, that shall be posted on Secretary of State's website, which also permits the electronic registration application to be submitted directly to the state election commission. Requires all completed applications received by the Secretary of State (SOS) to be promptly forwarded to the appropriate county election commission. Declares that the electronic registration application shall require the same information as required on a mail-in registration application.

**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Increase State Expenditures – Exceeds \$200,000/One-Time  
Exceeds \$100,000/Recurring**

**Increase Local Expenditures - \$237,500/One-Time\*  
\$47,500/Recurring\***

**Assumptions:**

- According to SOS, in reviewing online voter registration systems implemented in other states, such a system is typically implemented in conjunction with the respective driver's license agency for the state in order to verify the voter's information to facilitate capture of the voter's signature as required by statute. Such information is then transferred to local jurisdictions for review before finalizing the voter's registration.
- SOS indicates there would be costs to the Division of Elections to enlist a vendor to assist with implementation and updating of hardware and software in order to establish a link and maintain a website that will effectively communicate with the systems of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security and forward all necessary information in the proper format to the county election commissions. Such vendor will also assist in the recurring maintenance of the system after initial implementation.
- SOS indicates that in a recent survey of states implementing online voter registration, the average implementation cost was \$240,000, with a high of \$1,800,000.
- SOS also indicates that Arizona incurs a yearly maintenance cost of \$125,000.
- Based on information provided by the SOS, the one-time increase in state expenditures, including any additional costs for the Department of Safety to modify or create any necessary systems and the Department of State to contract with a vendor to develop the necessary information technology to implement the provisions of the bill, is reasonably estimated to exceed \$200,000. Based on the information submitted by the SOS relative

to Arizona's recurring maintenance costs, the recurring increase in state expenditures is reasonably estimated to exceed \$100,000.

- Local government costs are based on an estimated one-time cost of \$2,500 per county to purchase an additional software module necessary to process received online and electronic voter registration applications.
- The total one-time mandatory increase in local government expenditures is estimated to be \$237,500 (\$2,500 per county x 95 counties).
- Annual maintenance costs for counties are reasonably estimated to be \$500 per county.
- The total recurring mandatory increase in local government expenditures is estimated to be \$47,500 (\$500 per county x 95 counties).

*\*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

### **CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey L. Spalding", written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey L. Spalding, Executive Director

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